

NEWS RELEASE

Congressman Robert Matsui

Senator Dianne Feinstein

Senator Barbara Boxer

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Tuesday, February 25, 2003

CONTACT: CODY HARRIS

(202) 225-7163

MATSUI, BOXER, & FEINSTEIN INTRODUCE LEGISLATION TO PROVIDE FLOOD PROTECTION, TRANSPORTATION, AND SECURITY SOLUTIONS FOR SACRAMENTO REGION

WASHINGTON, DC—Today Congressman Robert T. Matsui (D-Sacramento), Senator Barbara Boxer (D-CA) and Senator Dianne Feinstein (D-CA) introduced legislation that addresses the Sacramento region's flood control, transportation, and homeland security needs by providing funding for the Folsom Dam Mini-Raise and a permanent bridge to replace the Folsom Dam Road.

The "Sacramento Public Safety Act of 2003" authorizes the Folsom Dam Mini-Raise, which would enable Sacramento's flood control system to handle storms far larger than any recorded event in the American River Watershed. At present, \$40 billion of property including the California State Capitol, 160,000 homes, over 100 schools, six major hospitals, 26 nursing home facilities, and three major freeway systems remain at an unacceptably high risk of a devastating flood. The Mini-Raise has broad support at the local, state, and federal level and recently received a favorable Army Corps of Engineers Chief's Report.

The bill also authorizes a permanent bridge to replace the road that currently runs atop Folsom Dam. Last week, the Bureau of Reclamation and the Department of the Interior announced their decision to close the road due to terrorism-related security concerns. That decision is effective February 28, 2003. A new bridge is necessary in order to ease the commute of the estimated 18,000 drivers who use the Folsom Dam Road every day, and to protect the Sacramento region from a potential terrorist attack.

"Sacramento is one of the most at-risk cities in the country in terms of flooding. Flood protection has long been my top priority in Congress, and this legislation will finally give Sacramento residents the peace of mind they deserve," said Matsui. "The recent decision to close Folsom Dam Road underscores the region's additional transportation and security needs. We should seek a way to solve these problems in a comprehensive manner. The Sacramento Public Safety Act does exactly that."

"The transportation part of this bill is crucial," said Boxer. "Closing Folsom Dam Road will protect the dam from terrorist attacks, but it will also cause serious traffic congestion in Folsom. We need to replace the road as soon as possible. This new bridge will alleviate security concerns by moving traffic flow away from the structure and into a position to provide the thousands of area commuters a reliable means of transportation across the river."

“A major flood in Sacramento would put at risk half a million people and thousands of homes and businesses,” Senator Feinstein said. “By authorizing the funding needed to complete the Folsom Dam Mini-Raise, this legislation would help protect Sacramento from a devastating flood. At the same time, the legislation would provide for the homeland security and transportation needs of the region by authorizing the design and construction of a permanent bridge adjacent to Folsom Dam.”

Congressman Matsui introduced the bill in the House today, and Senators Boxer and Feinstein introduced identical legislation in the Senate. Reps. Ellen Tauscher, George Miller, and Mike Thompson joined on as co-sponsors in the House.

Contact Cody Harris in Matsui’s office at (202) 225-7163, David Sandretti in Senator Boxer’s office at (202) 224-8120, and Howard Gantman in Senator Feinstein’s office at (202) 224-9629 for additional information.

###